
General Patient Care Protocols: EMS Unit Designations & Requirements

I. Intent

1. To describe the minimum requirements of transporting and non-transporting units for agencies operating within the District of Columbia that provide emergency medical services and transport.

II. Transport Units

1. A transport unit shall be defined as any land based vehicle or aircraft that is designed to transport a patient
 - A. From the scene of an incident to a health care facility, or
 - B. From a health care facility to a place of residence, or
 - C. Between two health care facilities.
2. Basic Life Support Transport Unit (Ambulance)
 - A. Minimum staffing shall consist of no less than two District of Columbia certified Emergency Medical Technicians - Basic.
 - B. Minimum equipment requirements per current Department of Health standards.
 - C. Any transport of a patient that is performed with less than the minimum staffing requirements must be reported to the Office of Emergency Health and Medical Services. Report must include circumstances surrounding the incident.

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II. Transport Units (continued)

3. Mobile Intensive Care Unit (Medic Unit)
 - A. Minimum staffing shall consist of no less than two District of Columbia certified Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedics or one Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic and one Emergency Medical Technician - Intermediate Paramedic.
 - B. Minimum equipment requirements per current Department of Health standards.
 - C. Any transport of a patient that is performed with less than the minimum staffing requirements must be reported to the Office of Emergency Health and Medical Services. Report must include circumstances surrounding the incident.
4. Mobile Intensive Care Training and Evaluation Unit
 - A. Minimum staffing shall consist of no less than
 - i. One District of Columbia certified Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic/Evaluator or one Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic/Field Training Officer and
 - ii. One of the following combinations of personnel
 - a. Two provisional Emergency Medical Technician - Intermediate Paramedics or
 - b. Two provisional Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedics or
 - c. One provisional Emergency Medical Technician - Intermediate Paramedic and one provisional Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic.

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II. Transport Units (continued)

- B. Minimum equipment requirements are the same as for the Mobile Intensive Care Unit.
 - C. Any transport of a patient that is performed with less than the minimum staffing requirements must be reported to the Office of Emergency Health and Medical Services. Report must include circumstances surrounding the incident.
- 5. Transport Helicopter (Medivac)
 - A. Minimum staffing shall consist of no less than one District of Columbia certified Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic and one FAA certified pilot.
 - B. Minimum equipment requirements per current Department of Health standards.
 - C. Any transport of a patient that is performed with less than the minimum staffing requirements must be reported to the Office of Emergency Health and Medical Services. Report must include circumstances surrounding the incident.

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III. Non-Transport Units

1. A non-transport unit shall be defined as any vehicle or aircraft that is not designed primarily to transport a patient, but is staffed by medically trained, District of Columbia certified personnel, and may be at the scene of an emergency incident.
2. Advanced Life Support Response Vehicles (Rapid Response Unit)
 - A. This unit is defined as a vehicle that is routinely dispatched on EMS incidents to primarily provide advanced life support treatment, but is not equipped to transport the patient to a hospital.
 - B. Minimum staffing shall consist of no less than two District of Columbia certified Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedics or one Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic and one Emergency Medical Technician - Intermediate Paramedic.
 - C. Minimum equipment requirements per current Department of Health standards.
 - D. Any transport of a patient that is performed with less than the minimum staffing requirements must be reported to the Office of Emergency Health and Medical Services. Report must include circumstances surrounding the incident.
 - E. Any transport of a patient that is performed without the use of a designated transport unit must be reported to the Office of Emergency Health and Medical Services. Report must include circumstances surrounding the incident.

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III. Non-Transport Units (continued)

3. Advanced Life Support Fire Apparatus (Paramedic Engine, Paramedic Truck, or Paramedic Heavy Rescue Squad)
 - A. This unit is defined as a vehicle that is designed primarily for fire fighting responses but can be dispatched on EMS incidents to provide advanced life support treatment, and is not equipped to transport the patient to a hospital.
 - B. Minimum staffing shall consist of no less than one District of Columbia certified Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic and one District of Columbia certified Emergency Medical Technician - Basic.
 - C. Minimum equipment requirements per current Department of Health standards.
 - D. When ALS procedures have been initiated and the patient is to be transported to a health care facility
 - i. An ALS Transport Unit of a type designated above be utilized for transport or
 - ii. A second Paramedic or Intermediate Paramedic arrives on the scene and accompanies the on-scene Paramedic to the hospital utilizing a BLS transport unit.
 - E. Any transport of a patient that is performed with less than the minimum staffing requirements outline in section D must be reported to the Office of Emergency Health and Medical Services. Report must include circumstances surrounding the incident.
 - F. Any transport of a patient that is performed without the use of a designated transport unit must be reported to the Office of Emergency Health and Medical Services. Report must include circumstances surrounding the incident.

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III. Non-Transport Units (continued)

4. Emergency Medical Services Advanced Life Support Command Vehicle
 - A. This unit is defined as a vehicle that is routinely dispatched on EMS incidents to primarily provide oversight and/or supervision at the scene of the incident. It is outfitted with advanced life support equipment and can provide medical care at the scene of an incident when required. It is not equipped to transport the patient to a hospital.
 - B. Minimum staffing shall consist of no less than one District of Columbia certified Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic.
 - C. Minimum equipment requirements per current Department of Health standards.
 - D. When ALS procedures have been initiated and the patient is to be transported to a health care facility
 - i. An ALS Transport Unit of a type designated above be utilized for transport or
 - ii. A second Paramedic or Intermediate Paramedic arrives on the scene and accompanies the on-scene Paramedic to the hospital utilizing a BLS transport unit.
 - E. Any transport of a patient that is performed with less than the minimum staffing requirements outline in section D must be reported to the Office of Emergency Health and Medical Services. Report must include circumstances surrounding the incident.
 - F. Any transport of a patient that is performed without the use of a designated transport unit must be reported to the Office of Emergency Health and Medical Services. Report must include circumstances surrounding the incident.

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III. Non-Transport Units (continued)

4. Emergency Medical Services Basic Life Support Vehicles
 - A. This unit is defined as a vehicle that is not routinely dispatched on incidents. It is outfitted with basic life support equipment and can provide medical care at the scene of an incident when required. It is not equipped to transport the patient to a hospital. This does not include privately owned vehicles.
 - B. Minimum staffing shall consist of no less than one District of Columbia certified Emergency Medical Technician - Basic.
 - C. Minimum equipment requirements per current Department of Health standards.
 - D. When BLS procedures have been initiated and the patient is to be transport to a health care facility a BLS Transport Unit of a type designated above be utilized for transport.
 - E. Any transport of a patient that is performed without the use of a designated transport unit must be reported to the Office of Emergency Health and Medical Services. Report must include circumstances surrounding the incident.

IV. Reporting Exceptions

1. In the event of a multiple casualty or mass casualty incident, as defined in the "Multiple or Mass Casualty Incidents," Protocol P4.
 - A. The need to report each individual transport not in compliance as outline above is waived.
 - B. An report outlining the overall incident, the number of patients treated and transported, the time the incident commenced and the time incident transport operations returned to normal must be reported to the Office of Emergency Health and Medical Services.

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